on locomotives in service. The detailed reply on various issues mentioned in the Report will be sent to Comptroller & Auditor General's (C&AG) in due course.

Norms for Transfer of Staff Working in Railway Reservation Offices

3494. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some rules exist to keep staff of all categories working in reservation offices on rotational transfer, being sensitive posting;

(b) if so, the details thereof with duration of such posting;

(c) whether some of staff of all cadres working in Reservation offices at Delhi Main, I.R.C.A., New Delhi Station, Sarai Rohilla, Sarojini Nagar, Kirti Nagar, Nizammuddin, Azadpur, Parliament House and Rail Bhawan have completed their prescribed tenure;

(d) if so, the reasons for not transferring them so far;

(e) whether Government propose to improve working of reservation office near Parliament House Reception; and

(f) if so, the number of counters to be reserved for persons authorised by MPs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) Staff holding sensitive posts and who frequently come in contact with public and or contractors/ suppliers, are required to be transferred every four years. The categories of Enquiry-cum-Reservation Clerk and Reservation Supervisor have been identified as sensitive categories.

(c) and (d) In the exigency of service, it is not always possible to transfer all those who have completed four years at a place, in one go. However, during January to May, 1998, 199 transfers have been ordered in Delhi area.

(c) Watch is kept on the working of the Reservation office near Parliament House Reception to ensure adequate & Satisfactory service.

(f) Two terminals are available in Parliament House Booking Office for providing reservation to persons authorised by MPs.

Direct BG Rail Line between Delhi and Kandla

3495. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a demand for direct rail link on BG line from Delhi to Kandla via Ajmer and Palanpur;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the action taken by Government thereon; and

(d) if no action has been taken so far, how Government propose to meet the demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) A direct broad gauge line already exists between Delhi and Kandla via Ajmer, Palanpur and Ahmedabad.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Safety of Passengers and Railway Property

3496. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether railways are responsible for safety of passengers and railway property;

(b) whether it is a fact that trains in South Central Railways have become unsafe in the last three years; and

(c) the steps proposed to increase vigilance in the trains in South Central Railways details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) The responsibility of providing security on the railways has been assigned to two agencies, namely, the Government Railway Police (GRP) which works under the State Government concerned and the Railway Protection Force (RPF) which is under the Ministry of Railways. According to the provisions of the Constitution of India, maintenance of law and order and control of crime on trains and railway premises are the responsibilities of the respective State Governments which they discharge through their Government Railway Police. RPF has been entrusted with the task of providing security to railway property which includes railways own assets and property entrusted to railways for transportation over its system.

(b) No, sir.

(c) In addition to various measures being taken by the GRP to improve the safety and security of the passengers, the Railway Administration is taking the following steps to help GRP in this task:—

1. RPF Officers have been directed to hold regular co-ordination meetings with their counter-parts of the GRP and Civil Police.
2. Sharing of Special Intelligence and Crime Intelligence between RPF and GRP is beign done at all levels.
3. Joint strategies for dealing with anti-social elements operating on Railways have been chalked out by the GRP and RPF.
4. RPF men are being trained in the identification and detection of explosive devices.
5. Field staff have been advised to maintain maximum alertness while on duty.
6. Sniffer dogs, wherever available, are being deployed at Railway platforms, yards etc, to sniff out explosive substances.

Agreement between AILRSA and Government for reduction of duty hours

3497. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was any agreement with the All India Loco Running Staff Association (AILRSA) and Government in August 1973 signed by the then Minister for Labour Shri K.V. Raghunath Reddy for the reduction of duty hours of Loco Running staff to 10 hours from"Signing on to Signing off".

(b) whether the same has been implemented;

(c) if so, the present position; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Some arrangement was arrived at after a series of meetings the Minister of Labour and Minister of Railways had with the representatives of Loco Running staff in August 1973.

(b) to (d) Instructions issued on 31-08-1978 & 03-04-1981 regulating the working hours of Loco Running staff were challenged before the CAT/Ernakulam Bench. Based on the guidelines laid down in the judgement delivered by the Hon'ble CAT on 10-01-1992, further instructions were issued in April, 1992 with the consent of both the employees' Federations viz. the All India Railwaymen's Federation and the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen, advising Zonal Railways that "duty at a stretch of running staff" should not ordinarily exceed 10 hours from departure of the train and overall duty from 'signing on' to 'signing off' should not exceed 12 hours, save in exceptional circumstances like accidents, floods/breaches, agitation, equipment failures etc. Implementation of these instructions is being monitored at